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REASON & REVELATION

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COULD THERE HAVE BEEN ANY **DEATH** BEFORE THE FALL?

**Why Doesn't God
Appear to Us
to Prove that
He Exists?**

A.P. Camp 2016

**"No Proof of God...
but the Universe Might
Just Be a Simulation?"**



Article In Brief... 

While humans could not die before the Fall, the biblical evidence implies that the rest of creation had that potential. Only those who ate of the Tree of Life could live indefinitely.

IF the Bible is from God (and it is¹), then we can know that it is accurate when discussing historical science. In order to interpret properly the natural evidence, then, one must know what the Bible teaches about the history of the Earth. There certainly are differing views about some of the particulars of the biblical Creation model, based on how one interprets certain passages. Some Scriptures are not explicit about precisely what happened at various times in Earth history (e.g., during the Creation week or during and immediately after the Flood). But the Creation scientist understands the importance of not contradicting Scripture when attempting to develop a comprehensive scientific model or framework within which all scientific disciplines must fit.

That said, the question of when death on the Earth began can have implications that affect our

understanding of various questions in Creation science. It is clear, biblically, that humans would not have died had they not sinned (Genesis 3:22), but what of the rest of the Creation? If animal death could occur before the Fall (i.e., before Adam and Eve's first sin), for example, then we would have to assume that death was a design feature of the planet from the beginning, rather than being a part of the Curse placed upon the Earth as a result of the Fall (Genesis 3:17-19). This concept could affect creationists' attempts to understand cases of so called "natural evil," where, for example, various living things seem to have been designed to kill (e.g., parasitoids, pathogens, and phages). If all death was solely a result of the Fall, then we would assume that such cases of "natural evil" were **not** part of God's original design, but were part of the Curse. If death could, in fact, occur prior to the

Fall, then a different response to some forms of "natural evil" might be more relevant (e.g., microevolution and/or diversification, displacement from intended habitat, or degeneration), although some forms of "natural evil" still might have been directly due to the Curse.

Also, if death could occur before the Fall, there might be implications of that fact when we examine the fossil record. Creationists generally interpret the bulk of the fossils that are found at the base of the fossil record to be a result of the Flood, since it is thought to be the first major catastrophic event in Earth history. It is thought that only local catastrophes happened in the 16 centuries up to the Flood. If death could occur prior to the Fall, however, then there may be another catastrophic event of global proportions that could be relevant when studying the fossil record as well: day three.

According to Genesis chapter one, prior to day three of the Creation week, the Earth was covered with water. On day three, God created the dry land and then created grass, seed-bearing herbs, fruit trees—the plants. Swimming and flying creatures were created on day five, and finally, land life on day six. It is easy for us to read through this simplified narrative of what God did on those four days without stopping to consider the possible geologic implications of His activity. On day three, God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so" (Genesis 1:9). This passage may be saying that God, in essence, scraped the

surface of the ocean floor, piling up a massive amount of Earth to cause some of it to be exposed from the water, forming land.² If so, it seems likely that mudslides would have occurred over the next several hours and possibly days, due to the wet material from the ocean floor being raised in elevation and water rapidly running off the continental surface. This activity could have begun the fossilization process of some of the plants and aquatic creatures created on days three and five, respectively. There are other options that would not have caused such mudslides,³ but the point is that the Creation scientist must at least consider the possibility that the earliest fossils in the record were a result of day-three activity.

So could there have been death prior to the Fall? And if so, are there theological implications? First, we know that plants were certainly able to die before the Fall, because they were to serve as food for humans and animals throughout the Earth (Genesis 1:30). Nobody seems to dispute that truth. It is argued, however, that plants are not thought to be “alive” in the same sense as animals. Unlike animals and humans, plants are never described as being “living creatures” (*nephesh chayyah*).⁴ God seemed to be making a distinction between kinds of life in Genesis 1:30 when He said, “Also, to every beast of the Earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the Earth, **in which there is life**, I have given every green herb for food” (emp. added). While that is true, it is also true that plants **can die in some sense** (Job 14:7-12;

John 12:24),⁵ which tells us that **not all death must necessarily be regarded in a negative light**.

It is true that Adam, Eve, the flying creatures, and the land animals were told by God originally to be herbivores (Genesis 1:29-30).⁶ So it is clear that it was not part of God’s original design plan for there to be bloodshed **by the hand of another**, at least among humans, birds, creeping things, and the “beast of the Earth” (apparently the land animals created on day six, Genesis 1:24-25, 29-30). But that does not mean that catastrophic activity, natural disasters, or natural death could not have still killed animals. Some argue that God’s creation could not have been “very good” (Genesis 1:31) if animals could suffer and die, since the creation was perfect.⁷ But this assumes (1) that animals, which are soul-less beings,⁸ can truly suffer in the same way humans can; and (2) that the creation could not still be “very good” and there be death. We have already seen that due to the occurrence of pre-Fall plant death,

the creation could still be deemed as “very good” by God, even with death occurring simultaneously. So the question then becomes, what did God mean by calling the creation “very good,” and what kind of death, if any, would not have been considered “very good” to God? It seems logical to infer that a “very good” creation simply meant that the created order was exactly as God intended for it to be, whatever that might be—death or no death. As one Creation scientist acknowledged concerning the pre-Fall world, “Although the pre-Fall world was ‘very good’ (Gen. 1:31), it was not ‘perfect’ (i.e., **it did not exhibit every meaning of ‘perfect’**).”⁹ What kind of death was a part of that “very good” creation must be gleaned, if possible, from the text.

It is argued that “Death is ‘the last enemy’ (1 Corinthians 15:26) which Jesus Christ came and died to defeat. And this would include animal death.”¹⁰ In the context of 1 Corinthians 15, however, Paul is

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not including animals in referencing the defeat of death, but rather, humans—those capable of sin (vs. 17).

Isaiah 11:6 is sometimes quoted as evidence that there was no animal death prior to the Fall.¹¹ “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.” The claim is that in the end, God will restore on Earth the conditions that were in effect in the Garden, where animals were not violent towards one another. Once again, however, in context we see that Isaiah 11 is a Messianic prophecy (cf. vss. 1-5), discussing the coming of Jesus and His kingdom in the first century using highly **figurative**, not literal, terminology. Isaiah may have simply been referring to the peace and harmony that would exist in the coming Church. In Christianity, for instance, those once viewed as predators—ferocious wolves, leopards, and young lions—are often found dwelling peaceably with those who would have once been their prey. If we understand Isaiah 11 to refer to the coming of Christ and the Christian dispensation, therefore, we could reasonably conclude that Isaiah’s prophecy was fulfilled when the Kingdom (i.e., the Church¹²) was established in Acts 2.¹³

It is also argued that God’s Curse after the Fall included the animals according to Genesis 3, and by implication, humanity’s death curse would have applied to the **animals** at that point as well.¹⁴ But that assertion is an assumption—the

text does not say that was the case. Second, the serpent was, indeed, “cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field” (Genesis 3:14), implying that the animals were all cursed, though not as much as the serpent. **But it is also true that the plants were included in the Curse as well** (vss. 17-18), and we have already seen that they were capable of death **prior** to the Fall.

Arguments have been made from various passages that tell us death was a result of sin (Romans 5:12-21), that shedding blood is necessary for the remission of sin, but would not have been necessary, by implication, without sin (Hebrews 9:22), and that Christ’s physical death and resurrection made it possible for physical death, initiated by Adam and Eve, to be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:21,22,26).¹⁵ Such passages, however, contextually, are talking about mankind, not animals, which are not imputed with sin. It is argued that Romans 8:19-22 indicates that the “whole creation”—which is thought to include the animals—suffers, groans, labors, and is under a bondage of corruption (vss. 21-22) due to man’s sin, and therefore, that the whole creation would not have so suffered prior to man’s sin—i.e., animals would not have suffered death.¹⁶ In the end, however, “the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (vs. 21, ESV), apparently returning to a pre-Fall state. Understand that there is considerable argument over the meaning of the word “creation” in Romans 8—whether or not it is referring to all of the created order,

or merely humans. To base an entire argument on such a disputed passage would be unwise, to say the least. It could be argued from the context, that “creation” is referring to humans—the only ones who can “eagerly wait for the revealing of the sons of God” (Romans 8:19). More specifically, the “**whole** creation” (vs. 22) could be referring to mankind in general (which “labors with birth pangs,” referring back to the punishment which female **humans** would have due to Eve’s sin), while “creation” (vss. 19,20,21) could be referring to Christians—i.e., the “sons of God” whom Paul has been discussing in the preceding verses. After all, “whole creation” is used in precisely that way—to mean mankind in general—elsewhere in Scripture. In Mark 16:15 (ESV), for example, Jesus tells the apostles to go preach the gospel to the “whole creation,” which is another way of saying to “all nations” (Matthew 28:19) and does not include animals. Regardless, Romans 8 cannot be used as conclusive evidence that animals did not die prior to the Fall.

The hallmark passage that seems to be used to try to sustain the idea that death did not occur prior to Adam and Eve is Romans 5:12-19:

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread **to all men, because all sinned**—(For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses...). Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to **all men**, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came **to all men**,

resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience **many were made sinners**, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous (emp. added).

Notice that, contextually, while this passage does discuss death as being a result of sin, it is clearly referring to humans and the effect of sin with regard to **mankind**, not animals. It was humans, not animals, that were made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), giving them the capacity to sin.

A passage that provides weight to the viewpoint that animals could die prior to the Fall is Genesis 3:22-24. After Adam and Eve sinned and God confronted them, pronouncing their punishments and making modest clothes for them, the text says:

Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, **lest he put out his hand and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live forever**"—therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden...and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the Tree of Life (emp. added).

Notice from this text that man's ability to live forever was not a direct miraculous act by God, or something inherent in the physical body of mankind (i.e., part of God's original design of the human body), but rather, was coupled with his **eating from the Tree of Life**, which apparently possessed miraculous healing qualities (cf. Revelation 22:2). The implication is that Adam and Eve could have **still** lived forever, even after sinning, if they were

able to access the Tree of Life and eat from it. That is the very reason why God used cherubim and a flaming sword to guard Eden and the tree. A further implication is that physical death was **always** possible from the beginning for anyone (and apparently, anything) that did not eat of the Tree of Life —i.e., entropy or the Second Law of Thermodynamics was in place from the beginning, governing the Earth. Adam and Eve were able to eat from the anti-entropy tree and not be subject to the effects of the Second Law; but without it, the effects of God's natural laws would have taken their course.

With that understanding in mind, what are the implications for the rest of the living beings on the planet? A straightforward reading of the text in Genesis 2:9 and 3:22,24 leads us to believe that God made and placed in the Garden a single fruit tree that, unlike the other fruit trees throughout the Garden that humans and living creatures could eat from, had physical life-giving qualities tied to it. Any living being that did not eat from that Tree would apparently eventually suffer physical death—hence, the name given to it: "the Tree **of Life**." If so, could the animals which were created throughout the Earth, which could not reach the Tree of Life to eat it, live forever? Could the swimming creatures that God had created on day five eat from the tree? If not, then how could they live forever? What about all of the animals that God created, surely spread out over the Earth, playing the crucial roles for the Earth for which God designed them? Were

they able to access the Tree of Life and live forever? Surely not. If we suppose that perhaps animals could live forever apart from the Tree of Life prior to the Fall, we would be going beyond the clear message of the text regarding the nature of the Tree. God seemed to want to emphasize in Scripture the fact that He tied eternal life to the Tree of Life.¹⁷ One would need more biblical evidence before arguing that the animals received eternal life apart from the Tree. If humans needed the Tree to live forever and were denied access to it after the Fall, it seems logical to conclude that the animals were affected in the same way.

SUMMARY

THE implication of the text seems clear on the matter: animals throughout the Earth, not made in the image of God, were never intended to live forever. They always had the ability to die, from the beginning. They were designed to die. Like plants, they were not made in the image of God. Their deaths are not in the same category of importance as that of humans. No wonder God, Himself, killed animals in order to clothe Adam and Eve properly (Genesis 3:21), even though there is no indication that those animals did anything to deserve death. It seems that animal death, like the "death" of a plant, is not a moral evil, but rather is part of God's plan for animals. Notice God's words to Noah and his sons after the Flood. After sanctioning the killing of animals as food for humans, God highlighted an important distinction:

(cont. on p. 80)

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“Whoever sheds **man’s** blood, by man his blood shall be shed; **for [i.e., because] in the image of God He made man**” (Genesis 9:6, emp. added). **Human** death is said to be significant, because we, unlike animals, are **like God**.

With this understanding about life and death in place, it becomes important to consider the possibility that some of the fossils in the record could have been from day-three activity. We can also see that some cases of “natural evil” among the animals may have been in place from the beginning. Calling such cases “natural evil” is, therefore, not appropriate. It cannot be said to be “evil” at all, if it was part of God’s design for those creatures all along.

The world was designed to serve as a “vale of soul-making”¹⁸ for humans. It was intended to prepare them for the afterlife, giving them an opportunity to make their choice about where they will spend eternity. A fundamental component of that design for the Universe is life and death. As part of our studies on Earth, while preparing for the afterlife, God seems to want us to understand life and death and their ramifications. We simply cannot escape death. Everywhere we look, whether by the naked eye or when studying bacteria under a microscope, we are reminded of mortality. It is clearly important to God for humans to acknowledge the reality of death. It appears that even before their first sin, Adam and Eve were capable of observing the evidence around them that death was a real thing—that God knew what He was talking about. They could know, by His mercy, they

were not being subjected to death. They could understand the concept about which God was warning them: “in the day that you eat of it, you [also—JM] shall surely die” (Genesis 2:17). When they sat on an ant, it could die. When a sauropod dinosaur stepped on a snake, the snake was not protected from death by a force field. Rather, the dinosaur’s weight would most certainly crush it, in harmony with God’s natural laws.

A wise man certainly “regards the life of his animal” (Proverbs 12:10), but he also understands that humans are different from animals. According to Jesus, we are “of more value” than them (Matthew 6:26; 10:31; 12:12; Luke 12:24). Those who submit to the will of God in faith will be able to live forever, spiritually (John 3:16); but not the animals. They were never intended to live forever. They serve as a reminder that we should seek life (John 10:10).

ENDNOTES

¹ Kyle Butt (2007), *Behold! The Word of God* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).

² **NOTE:** This is, no doubt, an oversimplification of what could have actually occurred on day three if God created land from sea floor material. God could have used basaltic rock from the base of the ocean to form the granitic rock that comprises much of the land continents today. Granitic rock is less dense, causing it to float higher in the mantle (exposing land), while the basaltic rock of the ocean floor tends to float lower in the mantle, lowering the sea level.

³ It is possible that the Earth was completely made of water to this point,

and God created the infrastructure of the Earth on day three, including the core, mantle, and crust, from that water (2 Peter 3:5), rather than raising material from the sea floor. There would likely be no mudslides if He chose to create land in this way.

⁴ Ken Ham (2014), “Was There Death Before Adam Sinned?” Answers in Genesis On-line, April 25, <https://answersingenesis.org/death-before-sin/was-there-death-before-adam-sinned/>.

⁵ Jeff Miller (2012), “Did Jesus Contradict the Law of Biogenesis in John 12:24?” Apologetics Press, <http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=106&article=1590>.

⁶ Kenneth Ham (1991), “Adam and Ants,” *Acts & Facts*, 20[9].

⁷ Avery Foley (2015), “Did Adam Step on an Ant Before the Fall?” Answers in Genesis On-line, December 4, <https://answersingenesis.org/death-before-sin/did-adam-step-on-an-ant-before-fall/>.

⁸ Bert Thompson (2001), *The Origin, Nature, & Destiny of the Soul* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), http://www.apologeticspress.org/pdfs/e-books_pdf/onds.pdf.

⁹ K.P. Wise (2014), “Spectra of Perfection: A Case for Biological Imperfection before the Fall,” *Journal of Creation Theology and Science Series B: Life Sciences*, 4:28, emp. added.

¹⁰ Foley.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Matthew 16:18-19; Daniel 2:31-44.

¹³ Mark 9:1; Colossians 1:13; Revelation 1:9; Matthew 3:2; 4:17; 10:7.

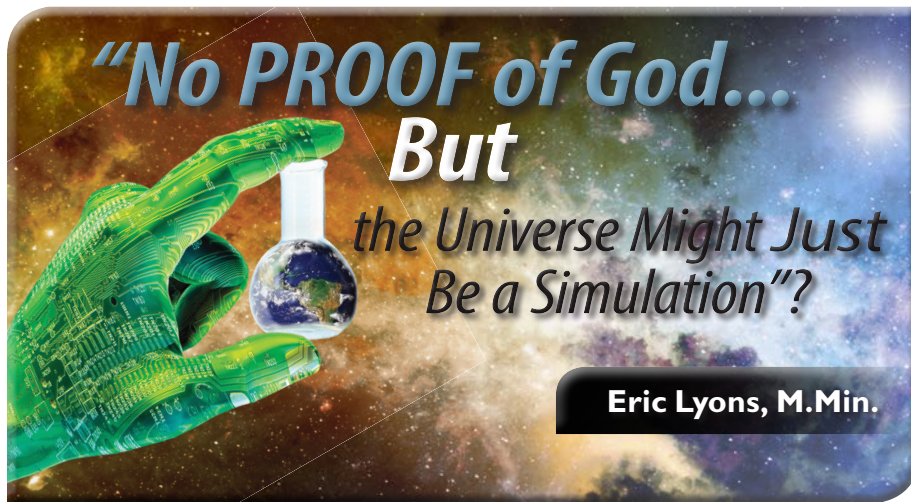
¹⁴ Foley.

¹⁵ Ibid.; Ham (1991).

¹⁶ Foley.

¹⁷ Genesis 2:9; 3:22,24; Revelation 2:7; 22:2,14.

¹⁸ John Keats (1895), *The Letters of John Keats*, ed. H. Buxton Forman (London: Reeves & Turner), p. 326.



DR. Neil deGrasse Tyson is one of America's most well-known evolutionary astrophysicists. He has worked as the Director of the Hayden Planetarium in New York City for two decades. He also frequently appears on television shows such as *The Colbert Report* and *Real Time with Bill Maher*. Though Dr. Tyson has made some oppressive comments regarding theism (and theists) in the past,¹ he is not an atheist; Tyson is agnostic: he admits that he is "someone who doesn't know" and "hasn't really seen evidence for" God, but "is prepared to embrace the evidence" if it is ever presented.²

Interestingly, Dr. Tyson recently made some outlandish comments at the 2016 Isaac Asimov Memorial Debate at the American Museum of Natural History about the nature of the Universe. According to Tyson, "the likelihood of the universe being a simulation 'may be very high.'"³ News organizations reported that Tyson indicated "it's **not** too hard to imagine that some other creature out there is far smarter than us" (emp. added).⁴ Perhaps we're just "some sort of alien simulation."⁵ Tyson went so far as to say, "[I]t is easy for me to imagine that everything in

our lives is just the creation of some other entity for their entertainment. I'm saying, the day we learn that it is true, I will be the only one in the room saying, I'm not surprised."⁶

Isn't it baffling what evolutionary agnostics and atheists will believe and what they won't (or don't) believe? Dr. Tyson is a very educated scientist who seems to have no problem imagining that god-like aliens made our Universe for their pleasure despite the complete **lack** of evidence for such a belief. Yet, at the same time, Tyson refuses to believe in God because he does not believe there is **enough** evidence to come to the conclusion that God actually created the Universe for His own glory (Psalm 19:1-4; Isaiah 43:7) and to be inhabited by His human creatures (Isaiah 45:18), who are made in His image (Genesis 1:26-27).

One thing that Dr. Tyson did allude to that everyone should freely admit based upon the evidence: "[I]t is easy for me to imagine that **everything in our lives is just the creation of some other entity**" (emp. added). In truth, Creation makes sense.⁷ "For every house is built by someone, **but He who built all things is God**" (Hebrews 3:4, emp. added). "The heavens declare the glory" of the

eternal, omnipotent Creator (Psalm 19:1), not some supposed alien civilization (who, in turn, would need an explanation for their existence if they really did exist).⁸ Sadly, men such as Dr. Tyson seem so open to the idea of "super" aliens, yet not to The **Supernatural** Creator, Who will judge our actions or lack thereof at the end of time (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

ENDNOTES

- ¹ See Michael Brooks (2006), "In Place of God," *New Scientist*, 192[2578]:8-11. See also Eric Lyons and Kyle Butt (2007), "Militant Atheism," *Reason & Revelation*, 27[1]:1-5, <http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=12&article=2051&topic=296>.
- ² "Neil deGrasse Tyson: Atheist or Agnostic?" (2012), *Big Think*, April 25, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CzSMC5rWvos>.
- ³ Kevin Loria (2016), "Neil deGrasse Tyson Thinks There's a 'Very High' Chance the Universe is just a Simulation," *Business Insider*, <http://www.businessinsider.sg/neil-degrasse-tyson-thinks-the-universe-might-be-a-simulation-2016-4/#.VypZthVrjq0>.
- ⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵ Michael Lazar (2016), "Could the Universe Be a Simulation? Neil deGrasse Tyson Thinks It Might," *Huffington Post*, May 1, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-lazar/could-the-universe-be-a-s_b_9816034.html.
- ⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷ Eric Lyons (2010), "Science, Common Sense, and Genesis 1:1," *Apologetics Press*, <http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=9&article=3758&topic=93>.
- ⁸ Cf. Bert Thompson (2004), "Is There Intelligent Life in Outer Space?" *Apologetics Press*, <http://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=9&article=1129>.



SOMETIMES our unbelieving friends wonder why God doesn't just appear to everyone on Earth and prove in person that He exists? Why doesn't He show Himself to each generation of humanity so that everyone on Earth can see and hear Him and know beyond a shadow of a doubt that He is real? After all, according to the Bible, the Lord appeared "to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty" (Exodus 6:3), and He "spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend" (Exodus 33:11). So why doesn't He do the same for everyone else?

Christians freely admit that there are many specific things that we do not know about the infinite, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient Creator of the Universe, including why He does or does not do certain things. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9). There is no way to know the mind of God

unless He chooses to reveal some of His ways to us. Moses wrote: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but **those things which are revealed** belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deuteronomy 29:29, emp. added). So has God specifically revealed why He has not appeared to every human being in the history of the world to prove His existence to them? The fact is, God does not expressly address this question in the Bible; but He does reveal enough to us about Himself and His creation to draw the following conclusions.

First, even if God directly appeared to and spoke with every person on Earth, not everyone would believe in Him. After all, God revealed Himself to mankind in the first-century (John 1:1,14), speaking like "no man ever spoke" (John 7:46) and working all manner of miracles, including walking on water, healing the blind, reattaching severed body parts with the touch of His hand, and raising the dead. Yes, even though, for example, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, and

came back from the dead Himself, many still did not believe in Him (John 11:45-53; 12:9-11)—they rejected Him despite the fact that He (God) appeared to them face to face.

In 2012, renowned atheist Richard Dawkins was questioned about his unbelief in God. Specifically, he was asked, "What proof, by the way, would change your mind?" He quickly responded by saying, "That is a very difficult and interesting question because, I mean, **I used to think** that if somehow, you know, great, big, giant 900-foot-high Jesus with a voice like Paul Robeson suddenly strode in and said, 'I exist and here I am,' **but** even that, I actually sometimes wonder if that would...."¹ Though Dr. Dawkins was interrupted, he clearly left the impression that even if God appeared to him, taking the form of a "giant 900-foot-high Jesus" with a mighty voice, even that encounter would probably not convince him.

Sadly, not only would many continue in their unbelief if God actually did appear to them, many more would reject His authority over them, even if they acknowledged His existence. Judas was among the closest friends and disciples of Jesus. He was the treasurer of the group. Yet, he was a thief who eventually betrayed the Lord. One might argue that Judas never believed (cf. John 6:60-71), which would only further validate our first point. But if he truly believed in Jesus as the Son of God, then he

ultimately chose money over the Master; he chose sin over the Savior. He was not, and will not be, the last to make such choices. In fact, before any human being ever came to know God and subsequently reject His will, there were a number of **angelic beings** who did. They are created heavenly beings (Colossians 1:16) who knew (and know) God, but willingly chose to reject His will for them (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). So wicked and rebellious to the God of heaven did Satan become that he even tried to tempt God to sin (Matthew 4:1-11). Make no mistake about it, in no way does acknowledging God's existence directly translate into loving Him and submitting to His will (Matthew 7:21-23). In fact, atheist Dan Barker demonstrated such rebelliousness in the Butt/Barker debate when he stated that, though he believes God "doesn't exist," "[i]f there is a hell and if the atheists get to the end of their life and discover, 'Yep, I was wrong, there is a God....' Then I would say to that God...**'you go to hell....** You do not have my respect.'"²

Third, God has already given every accountable person on Earth an adequate amount of evidence to come to a knowledge of His existence. The very reality of a material Universe (which could not have sprung into existence from nothing; nor is it eternal),³ testifies to the existence of a Creator. "For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God" (Hebrews 3:4). In fact, "[s]ince the

creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20). Since the time of Adam and Eve, mankind has been given the opportunity to see how "the things that are made" testify quite "clearly" on behalf of a powerful, invisible Creator. As the psalmist proclaimed, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (19:1-4).

So why doesn't God appear to every person on Earth to prove that He exists? The short answer is: "Because He, as the sovereign Ruler of the Universe, chooses not to." We may not know all of

God's reasons for why He chooses not to appear personally to every person on the Earth throughout every generation, but in no way does such a decision on His part prove (1) that He doesn't exist, or (2) that He is unkind and unfair. The fact is, God has always given man adequate evidence for His existence—so much so that any person who refuses to acknowledge His existence is "without excuse" (Romans 1:20).

ENDNOTES

- ¹ "Q&A: Religion and Atheism" (2012), ABC Australia, April 9, <http://www.abc.net.au/tv/qanda/txt/s3469101.htm>, emp. added.
- ² Kyle Butt and Dan Barker (2009), *Butt/Barker Debate: Does the God of the Bible Exist?* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), emp. added.
- ³ Jeff Miller (2013), "Evolution and the Laws of Science: The Laws of Thermodynamics," Apologetics Press, <http://www.apologeticspress.org/apcontent.aspx?category=9&article=2786>.

SPEAKING SCHEDULES

Kyle Butt

August 3	Sumiton, AL	(205) 902-9342
August 9	Athens, AL	(256) 232-1096
August 13-14	Pulaski, TN	(931) 363-3475
August 19-21	Sevierville, TN	(256) 435-9356

Eric Lyons

Aug 12-14	Cleburne, TX	(817) 517-7713
Aug 20-24	Sevierville, TN	(256) 435-9356
Aug 31	Birmingham, AL	(205) 988-5808

Dave Miller

August 3,10,17,24	Birmingham, AL	(205) 988-5808
August 21	Montgomery, AL	(334) 264-2985
August 31	Selma, AL	(334) 874-7941

Jeff Miller

August 10,17	Selma, AL	(334) 874-7941
August 12-14	Kimball, TN	(423) 837-8594
August 19-25	Sevierville, TN	(256) 435-9356



NOTE FROM *The Editor*



Successful AP Summer Camps

Apologetics Press has been conducting summer camps for six years. They have become one of AP's most effective tools in the promotion of the cause of Christ and the defense of the Christian Faith. They provide a tremendous means of insulating the young against the onslaught of unbelief and secularism assaulting American society. They stimulate spiritual growth. They foster new friendships that enable young people to have a network of individuals who are also trying to purify their lives and live for Christ. Quite frankly, we at AP have been pleasantly surprised and thrilled that AP camps have been so successful in achieving noble spiritual goals.

A mother recently related an incident that serves as a good example of the growing popularity and extent to which young people have come to appreciate AP camp. She and her husband loaded their two girls into the car, informing the girls that once they got on the road, they would divulge their destination as a surprise. When the time came to sur-



prise the girls, the mother, who was sitting in the front seat of the car, adjusted herself so that she could turn on her video camera and record the girls' reaction to the announcement that the parents were taking them to Disney World. Upon hearing the news, one of the girls responded: "You mean we're going to miss AP

Camp?" Both girls began to cry!

The next two weeks of camp are slated for June 2017. Week 1 will focus on "The Reliability of the Bible" and Week 2 on "Creation vs. Evolution." If you want your children to experience an outstanding summer camp, to be strengthened spiritually, and to be exposed to quality Christian young people and adults, you might want to consider exposing them to one of AP's Christian Evidences Summer Camps.

Dave Miller

**See Center Spread
for More Details**